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THE GIFT OF **DISCERNING** OF SPIRITS



VOLUME NUMBER EIGHT

of a nine part series on The Gifts of The Spirit

The Gift of Discerning of Spirits

by

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(Volume number eight of a nine part series on The Gifts
Of The Spirit.)

"... to another discerning of spirits"
I Corinthians 12:10

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1

What Is the Gift of Discerning of Spirits?

You can live almost any type of Christian life that you want to. You can have a little bit of God or you can have a lot of God. You can just get born again by the Spirit of God (which is the greatest thing that will ever happen to you), or you can go on with God and study the Bible and find out what God's promised to you.

It's like healing. You can be healed if you want to be healed. But you can't be healed without God's power and without God's Word. So you study what God says on healing and apply it correctly. Then God's healing power comes into manifestation and brings the healing to you. God's healing power demolishes diseases, breaks them up, disturbs them, and drowns them out of a human body. But you have to keep the healing power working, with the switch of faith turned on.

It is the same thing, exactly the same principle works for the 12th chapter of I Corinthians. You have to love, respect, cherish, believe, talk about, teach about, preach about, think about and meditate about it. If you don't, the 12th chapter of I Corinthians will stop working for you.

Everything you're interested in, in God, in the Bible, God will give to you. God says that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. If you're not hungry and thirsty after the 12th chapter of I Corinthians; if you're not hungry and thirsty for the gifts that God has given to the Church, the Holy Ghost

will probably never give them to you.

But if you have a respect for them, and recognize what they are, then pray to God. Say, "God, don't let the devil trick me. I want to be in your will now, Jesus. Don't let the

devil pull a bunch of tricks on me." Start confessing, "The Holy Spirit lives inside of me, He's greater than the devil."

That's all God needs to hear you say. When you say He's greater than the devil to you, He'll be greater than the devil. The devil won't be pulling any tricks on you— he may try. But he won't pull much on you because the Holy Ghost will rescue you.

You might say, "What do you mean by that?"

The Holy Ghost will show you what kind of a spirit you're dealing with, because it's all free. It's a free gift to the Church from God. It's called *the discerning of spirits*.

Some people say, "I've got the gift of discernment from the Lord."

There's no such gift in the Bible as discernment.

People say that all the time, full gospel people say, "I've got the gift of discernment."

No you don't. There is not a gift of discernment— that's usually a gift of suspicion.

Now if God shows you somebody's spirit, you've got a gift of discerning of spirits. There is a gift of discerning of spirits. You've got to keep it Scriptural.

I am going to teach you on the discerning of spirits. God does not want you to be ignorant of the spirits around you. God doesn't want you to be ignorant of the spirits that you're in business with. God doesn't want you to be ignorant of the spirits that you live in the house with.

God wants you to know the spirit and He wants you to know the motives of it. And you can know it, too. The Holy Ghost will show it to you. The gift of the discerning of spirits will take you into even the motives of the spirit and show you the depths of it.

The devil doesn't pull anything on the Holy Ghost.

This gift is a matter of life and death to you, in many cases.

This gift is a matter of being happy or being sad for the rest of your life, in many cases.

It's the difference of being successful or being poor, in many cases.

If you're hung up in business with a man with a wrong spirit, and you get your signature on a lot of papers with him, it could take you years to get out of it. And you can suffer financially for years because you've gone in business with a wrong spirit. If you'd had the gift of discerning of spirits operating through you, because you'd prayed about it, the Holy Ghost would have said, "No, don't do that."

Don't ever make up your mind about anything, to speak of, until you've prayed. Find out what kind of a spirit you're dealing with. God will show you. I guarantee you the Lord will show you, if you'll pray about it.

Now where a lot of people get tricked and get hung up with the wrong spirit (and it causes them confusion, trouble, heartache, misery, poverty and everything else) is they make up their mind what they are going to do, and don't even pray about it. They aren't even open to the Holy Ghost to give them discerning of spirits and show them somebody's spirit. They have already made up their mind what they are going to do because they think it's right.

You can't THINK something is right. You have to KNOW. You can't think with your head on certain decisions you have to make in your life.

You can't THINK, I'm supposed to marry this person. I like him. I THINK I'm supposed to marry him, but I don't know for sure. And six months after you get married you say, "Well how'd I get in this mess?"

If you would have prayed, the Holy Ghost would have shown you. You should have just thrown the person over on the Lord and prayed, "God, if this is not the one for me, move them out of my life."

Just start praying and the Spirit of God will show you if that's the one He wants you to be connected with or not.

It's the same thing in business, same thing, decisions, decisions, day by day, week by week, month by month; all down through your life.

My Brother and Sister, I want you to get a picture of the importance of the gifts of the Spirit. They are the weapons of your warfare. They really are. They are weapons from heaven.

They are not just something you're going to learn a little about and maybe they'll operate for the next week or two. You'd better stay humble before the Lord and have great respect for them. Tell God you want them the rest of your life.

You can live free from goofed-up spirits for 30 years and then just start relaxing a little bit, let the 12th chapter of I Corinthians not be precious to you anymore and the devil will come along and blast you with one.

He'll bombard you so he'll get your life goofed up, messed up, twisted up by getting a wrong spirit in your life. See you forgot about the discerning of spirits. You forgot that the Holy Ghost will show you somebody else's spirit, the shape of it, the condition of it, the quality of it, how they think.

God doesn't want you to be ignorant of the discerning of spirits. God doesn't want you to be ignorant of knowing the spirit of somebody else around you, if you're going to work with them, live with them, or have any dealings with them. God wants you to know their spirit. God doesn't want you to be ignorant of it and you don't have to be.

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

"Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

"And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

"And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

"To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

"To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

"But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ...

"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

"And if they were all one member, where were the body?

"But now are they many members, yet but one body.

"And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you" (I Corinthians 12:1-12, 1821).

The gift of discerning of spirits is given to you by God **to profit with**. If you'll listen to the Holy Ghost, you'll profit, too. He'll rescue and save you out of many pitfalls between now and the time you go to heaven.

You're just like me, my Brother and Sister, you're desperate for this gift. You have to have it working all the time.

Just as sure as you get to the point that you think you don't need it because you've arrived, you're so smart, the devil will send deceiving spirits to appear to you and manifest themselves as angels of light. They are so strong that they'll make you think things are just fine when they're straight from the pits of hell.

I've got news for you. I don't care how smart you are, without the Holy Ghost, you're no match for the devil.

But if you are open to and learn from the Holy Ghost, He'll give you the discerning of spirits. It will operate through you supernaturally. He'll speak to your spirit and let you know what kind of spirit it is. The devil doesn't pull anything over on the Holy Ghost.

You don't know about a person's spirit until God shows you. You might pick up a little. But if God doesn't want you involved with something, the Holy Ghost will come upon you and He'll grieve your spirit. He'll say, "No."

When the Holy Ghost says, "No," you'd better run.

In most of the churches this gift doesn't even operate. I've been in churches that if this gift were in operation, they'd throw half of the staff out in the street. I've been in churches where even the staff of the church was goofed up, like homosexuals involved in the music department. But they would just go along and have services, look at each other, smile and sing, because this gift was not in operation. If it was in operation, God would have thrown half of them off the stage.

So when the gift is not in operation, there's nothing for the devil to worry about. He can just walk in and get a song book and help you sing "Amazing grace how sweet the sound." And the average Christian wouldn't know any different.

You say, "Well, why didn't God show me that? I can't believe this could happen. Why didn't God show me that?"

Because you didn't study the 12th chapter of I Corinthians. You weren't open. You didn't know. You were too ignorant for the Holy Ghost to give you discerning of spirits. You didn't take time to study it. You didn't know how valuable it was. You just kind of shrugged it off.

You said, "Oh well, I'm saved. I'm baptized with the Holy Ghost and talk in tongues, a little bit. Well, I don't know the 12th chapter of I Corinthians too well, but I know God."

People think because they know God that they're going to get everything, but they're not.

You're not going to get everything because you know God. **You have to know your enemy also.** You have to know what God has given you by the Word. If you don't, the devil will wring you out like a rag. He'll punch you so full of holes you couldn't even hold mush, much less soup. The gospel will just come into you every service and run right out, all over the floor, everywhere. By Wednesday you'll say, "I'm so empty. Why am I so empty?"

You didn't take what you learned on Sunday to heart. You didn't put it inside of you. You didn't study the Bible. Your foundation is not strong. It's weak, flimsy, full of holes. You haven't taken the time to study the 12th chapter of I Corinthians. You don't know anything about the gifts of the Spirit. You don't know the importance of them. You're not listening. You have need of the gifts of the Spirit.

God said, "I've taken nine gifts of the Spirit and set them in the Body of Christ. I have them manifested as it pleases Me." They are all unique. They all have their own way. They all have their plan. They all have their own help for Christians.

You can't just enjoy seven of them. You need all nine of the gifts of the Spirit in your life. It is so important that you understand that. Each one of them is completely different. They all operate completely differently even though they are all given out by the Holy Ghost. They all have their own place. One of them cannot replace another one, even though two or three of them many times work real closely together.

Do you understand? You need all nine gifts of the Spirit in your life.

2

To Know The Difference Between Truth And Error

What is the purpose of the discerning of spirits?

The purpose and meaning of this gift is to know and discern the spirit that motivates a person, whether truth or error.

God wants you to know the truth. That's the thing that sets you free from the devil's power—the truth. And the discerning of spirits will give you the truth about somebody else's spirit. Now, He doesn't show you everything about everybody's spirit. But He does show you the spirit of a person if He doesn't want you involved with him. He says, "No." (That doesn't necessarily mean the person isn't nice. It simply may mean He doesn't want you involved with him.)

God wants you to know the difference between truth and error.

"We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (1 John 4:6).

Because we are of God, we know the difference between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. You better know the difference.

You may say, "Well, sometimes I don't know the difference."

The gift of the discerning of spirits will show you the difference.

You're saved and baptized with the Holy Ghost, aren't you? If you're not you can get that way right now. It's a free gift. It's been paid for. Just ask Jesus to forgive your sins and come into your heart. Make Him your Lord. Ask Him to baptize you with His Holy Spirit. You see, salvation is a gift.

The baptism in the Holy Ghost is a gift. They are gifts from God. But they are not one of the gifts of the Spirit.

These nine gifts of the Spirit are like weapons to overcome the power of the devil, so the devil can't deceive you.

When you start knowing the difference between truth and error, you might as well get ready for the battle.

People tell me, "I never had a battle in my life until after I got baptized in the Holy Ghost. After I started doing something for God, started praying a lot and started taking authority over the devil, I've been having all kinds of battles in my life."

You have to know God and you have to know the devil. You have to know the plan of both of them and how they operate.

If you ever start doing anything for God, you might as well get ready to fight, because the devil is going to try to stop you. He's going to do everything he can to stop you.

As long as you're not doing anything for God and you're ignorant, you're no threat to the devil. The devil is not going to bother you to any degree until he gets ready. He knows that you're ignorant and it doesn't make any difference anyway, you're not going to step out and do anything for God. He can just pull all kinds of tricks on you and push you around the way he wants to.

He can get you involved with all kinds of goofed-up people, and you don't know the difference.

God doesn't want you involved with goofed-up people. He only wants you to WITNESS to them. You have to watch yourself by even sitting down and eating with goofed-up people all the time. Now, you have to be like Jesus, you can't be too good to eat with a sinner. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about inviting the wrong kinds of spirits into your house to sit at your table to eat with you. You can't afford to have those kinds of strong spirits, full of lying and deceiving personalities, in your home.

You see, if you don't know anything about the 12th chapter of I Corinthians, they'll get next to you. They'll pull you into things that you never even dreamed you'd ever be pulled into.

God doesn't want you involved in everything. You have to find out what God wants for you. And I'll tell you, God's powerful about it. God doesn't want you fooling around with deceiving spirits all the time. Stand up bold and witness to them, but as far as you participating with them in all that stuff and running with them—no! no!

3

Paul Recognized a Deceiving Spirit

When you allow the gift of discerning of spirits to operate through you, the devil is going to get mad. I'm going to tell you right now, in advance, if it hasn't happened to you before, the devil is going to get mad at you and he's going to attack you.

But God doesn't want you to be deceived. And when you keep the victory in God, God takes what the devil does to you and turns it around and uses it for His glory.

This is exactly what happened to Paul. Let's read it.

"And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour" (Acts 16:16-18).

Now talk about a deceiving spirit! Let's take an example. Say I went to a town and walked through the door of a meeting of a thousand people. And there, some little lady back towards the back of the church building just kind of cried and cried and started walking behind me as I walked toward the platform. She was crying and crying and saying, "This man belongs to the Lord. This man belongs to the Lord. This man belongs to the Lord."

That would not be an easy spirit to spot. You would never spot it. You would never know without the discerning of spirits. You would never know unless the Holy Ghost

showed you. It is so deceiving. See how easy you can be deceived? She spoke good, right words.

But the supernatural power of God that lives in your belly can show you a spirit—I don't care what it says, what it does, or how it acts.

It doesn't make any difference what a human being says, does, or acts, that is no sign that it is a spirit of truth. I know spirits that talk about Jesus all the time —saying good things. They pray for the sick and everything, but they're just as phony as a \$3 bill. They'll talk about God, talk about Jesus, talk about salvation, talk about men of God, talk about the things of God and they are just as phony as they could possibly be.

You want to get this. You don't want to let this pass by you.

Let's look at verse 16 again. This is God talking to you. You need to know what kind of a spirit she had. God explains it to you right here. *"And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying."*

Fortune tellers, soothsayers. That's the kind of spirit God says now you're dealing with. Now listen to that spirit: *"The same spirit followed Paul..."* not a different one, *"and us, and cried saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation."*

Brother, you have to have the discerning of spirits to know that spirit. That's enough to deceive anybody without the Holy Ghost. But the Holy Ghost has gifts and one is the gift of the discerning of spirits. And when He manifests himself, He shows you that spirit. You see it in the spirit world.

Not only does the discerning of spirits show you the spirit, it shows you the motives of it and the condition of it—whether it is truth or error. That's how important the gift of discerning of spirits is to you.

I know spirits like that, don't you? I know spirits like that at a dozen churches. They talk and get themselves involved with the ministry (I mean the top platform ministry) and they are just as goofy as they possibly can be. And the pastor doesn't know any difference.

They look at the pastor and cry and say, "Oh, you're such a servant of the Lord. The Lord has sent me here to be under you. You're such a servant of the Lord." And they go off and do goofy things.

When God shows me that I say, "Yes, I'm a servant of the Lord. And you won't do anything unless it's Scriptural, if you're going to work out of this church. Do you understand that? Don't do anything unless you have chapter and verse for it. You'll get the whole bunch of us in trouble with God."

You know, real *spiritual* people, when they get *spiritual*, get things on their own. "The Lord told me," they say.

"Is that right? You got chapter and verse for it? "Oh the Spirit told me."

I say, "The God I serve and the Bible I read say that the Spirit and the Word agree. Show me chapter and verse where it says you are supposed to give people orders all the time telling them, 'God told me to tell you to do this.'"

They will just call you up in the middle of the day and say, "God told me to tell you to do this." And God hasn't dealt with you about anything. It's a shock to you.

If people tell you that just forget it. Understand? Please, for your own sake and for your preacher's sake, forget it.

Sometimes a real *spiritual* person will tell a partner in marriage "God told me to tell you to do this." And because you think that person is *real spiritual*, you obey him and a whole bunch of confusion and trouble with your mate follows. And all it is, is the devil. And you thought they were *spiritual*. Why did you think they were *spiritual*? You thought they were *spiritual* because you're just as dumb as they are. And God says you're ignorant.

God doesn't get people in trouble. The Holy Ghost doesn't get people in trouble. You have to watch yourself on

listening to goofed-up spirits.

"And this she did many days."

People ask me, "Why didn't Paul stop her?"

Paul was close to God. He wrote about 2/3's of the New Testament. Why didn't he stop her?

How could he stop her unless the Holy Ghost showed him her spirit?

I mean, I wouldn't. If the door opened in the back of a church where I was holding a meeting and a little old lady walked up behind me crying and weeping and said, "He is a man of the Lord. Oh thank you Lord, for sending him here. He's a man of the Lord." I wouldn't turn around and say, "I'm not either." I wouldn't turn around and rebuke her. The only way I could possibly ever know a spirit like that is for the Holy Ghost to show me. And if He didn't manifest himself and show me, how would I ever know?

You might say, "Well boy, I couldn't be deceived."

Oh yes you can. By a spirit like that one, you can be deceived.

What are you going to do with a little old lady running around crying saying good things about God and you? What are you going to do about it? What could Paul have done?

You say, "But he was Paul."

Paul was a man that lived in a body like yours and mine. So he was Paul. He had to have the gift of discerning of spirits operate to show him somebody's spirit. Paul couldn't make God do things. He had to wait for the Spirit of God to manifest himself.

Now notice this: *"And this she did many days. But Paul, being grieved..."* Do you see that: *"being grieved"*?

That's God's number one way, in the ministry of discerning of spirits, to show you that you're dealing with a spirit of error—your spirit will become grieved.

Now you'd better do something about it, or run from it. I'm warning you. When the Holy Ghost begins to grieve your spirit about somebody else's spirit, you better go witness to

them, get that spirit out of them, get them saved, get them baptized in the Holy Ghost, or get away from them completely.

Do you understand that? Cast that thing out of them or get away from them completely. You cannot get involved with a spirit when your spirit becomes grieved. You better not.

"But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour."

That happens many times. It didn't say he came out that minute. Sometimes when you're dealing with the devil and evil spirits, they don't come out that minute.

I'm sure Paul just turned around and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her," and just kept on walking. I feel sure in my spirit that Paul didn't even stop and pray for her. I feel sure that he just said it one time and just kept on going about his business.

He broke the power of that spirit. The Bible says the spirit left her in that same hour.

I have broken the power of the devil many times in peoples' lives and just gone about my business.

I've come to somebody in the prayer line and the Lord showed me an evil spirit was bothering them. I said, "I break your power, satan, in Jesus' name, come out." Then I have just gone on and prayed for the other people. I've done it a lot of times.

Four or five minutes later, they start taking a fit. They fall on the floor, taking a fit. That spirit is wrestling with them. He doesn't want to leave. I'd be down at the other end of the line praying for some other people. The Holy Ghost would deliver them completely.

You see, I said, "In Jesus' name you can't stay in this person. I'm not going to let you. I'm telling you to come out." That thing gets so mad because I did that. But it has to leave.

Jesus will confirm the gospel with signs FOLLOWING.

You just can't hang around somebody all the time that is possessed with evil spirits and demand the manifestation right that moment. That's not the way you do it. You have to have more faith than that.

That is *one* way you could possibly do it if you wanted to stay with them long enough. In certain cases sometimes you have to.

I did stay with a boy that had lost his mind for eight hours, one time. The reason I stayed with him eight hours and prayed was because God moved upon me supernaturally in a shopping center and told me to go to a place in Chattanooga, Tennessee. When I went there, there was a 19-year-old college boy there that had lost his mind.

They had him locked in a room with a guard. He didn't even know his own name. He had taken off all his clothes and gone out streaking. When he went outside with people, with all his clothes off and started streaking, his mind snapped.

You have to watch that kind of stuff, brother. Maybe you don't know this, but what you do with your body affects your mind. That's the reason the mental patients in the mental hospitals are all goofed up. And I've worked with a lot of them. But now get this, I've never worked with one of them that hadn't been doing abnormal, goofed-up things to their bodies. They are all alike, that I've worked with.

If you can keep your body under subjection, under the laws of God, your mind will never snap. If you'll pray, and keep your body intact, you'll never go crazy.

But if you get too far out in sin and do goofed-up things to your body, God will take His hand off you. God made your body in His image. And He lives in you. Your body is the house of the Holy Ghost. Paul said the Holy Ghost will not even live in an unclean vessel. He'll leave it. You have to watch yourself real close.

Mental hospitals in America are full and have a waiting list. Everyone of them could be healed, if somebody would recognize their spirit and what it's doing to them and give them the right recipes and correction.

I get them and shake them. I shake them just like shaking an apple tree. Of course, they'll lie to you. They'll all lie to you. See, the devil is a liar.

When I start counseling with a mental patient, I always say, "What have you been doing to your body?"

They'll get mad when I say that because that's what they've been doing. They'll get mad and say nothing.

I'll say, "You're a liar."

And then they'll say, "I'm not either." And many of them will start cursing.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you," I say, "you're a dirty, black liar. You're a dirty liar."

After about five minutes of that kind of pressure, they always start breaking and the truth comes out. You would not believe what some human beings do to their bodies. You would not believe that a human mind could even create such ideas.

But what is it? It's a deceiving spirit of the devil.

Now, that boy I prayed with for eight hours got delivered. After eight hours of prayer, foam began to run out of his mouth on the floor and his mind snapped back into him.

He was from New Jersey and his daddy had been driving all night to pick him up. When his daddy came in, they wanted me to talk to him.

I said, "Mister, what kind of a church do you go to?" (See, I know the answers for people like that. I don't have to study about it or think about it, I know the answers. The Spirit of God is greater than anything in the world. Unless they get in a good solid church, where the Spirit of God is flowing, people like that are going to stay goofed up. The Spirit of God is the answer to everything.)

He said, "I go to a Bible-believing church, Mr. Hayes."

I said, "They all believe that, they say. All churches have the Bible, Mister. Do you go to a church where your pastor will invite people to come down who get confused and messed up and he lays his hands on them? Does he then claim the victory of God and command all foul, deceiving and confusing spirits to go in Jesus' name so that person can have victory and think straight? Does your pastor do that?"

He said, "I don't think my pastor knows anything about that kind of stuff. I've never seen him do anything like that. What do you think I ought to do?"

"You ought to find yourself a new church and a new pastor. That's what you ought to do," I said. "You might be able to get along there. You might be a strong individual and you might be able to get along there with that kind of spirit. You might make it into heaven, if they teach salvation. But your son doesn't have a strong spirit like yours, Mister. He has a weak spirit right now. He is going to have to be in a place where they have the ministry of the laying on of hands so God's clean holy power can go down through his mind and drive out every evil thought. Hands need to be laid on him every Sunday for the next three or four months just praying the blessings of God upon Him. Let some pastor that is filled with the Holy Ghost let the Spirit of God come through him and transfer into the boy.

4

The Spirit Will Flow

Lester Sumrall taught me about the importance of spirits flowing, how certain people's spirit flowed. He didn't know he was teaching me. I didn't ask him to teach me. I got taught from him because of the condition of my own spirit.

I'd been going to his church and holding meetings for years. We even had a conference one time together. I might lay my hands on everybody during the week-long meeting.

I'd be in his office the day after the meeting was over and he'd say, "Brother Norvel, wait right here. Let me go get my three sons."

He'd go get his three sons: Frank, Steve, and Peter. He'd say, "Get in line here boys. I want Brother Norvel to lay his hands on you one more time before he leaves."

I'd think to myself, I already prayed for them two or three times. I already laid my hands on them two or three times, since I've been here this week. I wonder why he wants me to lay hands on his three sons again, before I leave the premises. But I was ashamed to ask him. I didn't want to ask him.

But one trip back there, he let it out. He said, "Put your hands on them, Norvel, one more time before you leave." He said, "I want the spirit you've got, Norvel, to go into my sons. I like the spirit you've got, Norvel. I like the spirit that God has given you. I want it to go into my sons. I want all three of my sons to have it. Lay your hands on them so that spirit will go into them. It will be transferred from you into them. Claim them for God, Norvel, when you lay hands on them. Claim them for the gospel's sake."

I would lay my hands on them and claim them for the gospel's sake.

None of them ever did go out and get a job in the world. They stayed right with God all the time. They never worked

one day outside of the church. They have never worked one day for a salary or an hourly wage. They were trained and brought up right and have always worked in the work of the Lord—every one of them.

Of course, I have seen people in the gospel working that I wouldn't want to have lay their hands on me. I'd be afraid some of it might rub off on me.

But there are others that you desire to be around. That's the reason why I used to get Brother and Sister Hagin and people like that to come to my house and lay their hands on my daughter. I'd say, "Oretha (Hagin), take Zona in your arms, just put your arms around her." Brother Hagin came from a broken home; so did my daughter. Compassion always went out from him to her. He'd pray for her. She and Brother Hagin are still such good buddies.

She doesn't trust women too much. She would always say, "I trust Sister Hagin, Daddy. What she tells you is the truth. When Sister Hagin puts her arms around me and prays for me, I feel a clean, genuine, something real going into me. I feel it flowing from her to me, when she's holding me, Daddy." She said, "She's so sweet. She's real. I trust her, Daddy. You know I don't trust many women, but I trust her. Sister Hagin is real, Daddy."

Brother, you know a spirit when you get around it. If it's real and straight from heaven you know it. I mean, there's no question about it. You just know it— that's all.

If you are sensitive to the Spirit and want to know the truth, God will let you know the truth. If you're saved and baptized in the Holy Spirit, God will let you know the truth. Remember what I John said? We are of God. We have a right to know the difference between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

5

It Makes The Devil Mad

God will show you a spirit that is not truth. The devil doesn't want you to recognize him. It makes him mad. And he'll attack you.

That's what happened to Paul. Did he ever get in trouble when he cast the devil out of that woman!

"And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city" (Acts 16:19-20).

You better believe it. You trouble the devil too when you start discerning his spirits. The devil doesn't want you to recognize him. That's one reason you're desperate, sometimes, to have the gift of discerning of spirits imparted to you. One thing that the devil has in mind is for you not to recognize him.

He wants to work and you not recognize him.

That's the very reason he's got the churches in the shape they are in today. That's the reason the devil can walk right into a church in a cancer patient, sit down and sing songs, hear a sermon, and get up and walk home. The devil doesn't mind her going to church, not there. That spirit of death that is already in her has already laid his cold, clammy hands on her and he knows he's going to kill her. He knows she doesn't have a chance because her church doesn't have healing services. The devil has already talked that church out of having healing services. You see, the spirit of death is the enemy of God.

God didn't have anything to do with it. God didn't talk them out of it. But the devil got into the minds of men. The men that run the church say, "Our church doctrine says this is what we do and this is the way we do it."

Jesus said, "This is the way you do it. Lay hands on the sick and they shall recover."

But we come along to this church and they say, "We're going to do it the way we want to do it. This is the way we do it. We believe God could heal you if He wanted to. And it's up to you to believe that."

So the whole congregation believes that. But, they forgot to recognize the power of the devil. The devil doesn't want you ever to be healed. So they all die. There's nobody to help them.

Now, if one of them gets healed, they get healed on their own. But they don't get it at church.

You might ask, "How do you know they're not going to get it at church?"

They can't get it—not until they change their doctrine. They don't have healing services; they're ashamed to have healing services. There is no way they can get healed until they change their doctrine.

I went to a denominational church, not long ago, and had a healing service because they recognized the spirit that I had. They asked me to come and speak. (This church's denomination does not believe in divine healing. They don't teach divine healing.)

That's one thing about denominational people, even if their doctrine doesn't teach it, if they see something real, *they want to believe it*. I mean, if it's actually real, they want to believe it.

The people of this church had attended a charismatic conference where I was teaching. I spoke, gave an invitation, and then gave an invitation for healing.

I guess a couple hundred people came forward. There was a girl from this church sitting in the back with a crooked back. All of a sudden the Spirit of God said to her, "You're supposed to be down there." She just sat there. Three times the Lord spoke to her.

The third time the Lord said, "You're supposed to be down there," she got up out of her seat. She started walking

down towards the front.

She said, "On the second or third step I took, a hot spot hit me in the back and instantly my crooked back straightened out."

She went back and told her church this. They invited me to come.

When I went, the Spirit of God fell on those people. Although I had another appointment, I stayed there an extra night. I was afraid not to. God visited those denominational people so strong, I was afraid not to.

The pastor said, "These people like your spirit. They want you to come back. We haven't had this large of a crowd for six years in this church. They like your spirit."

I said, "Well, it's trained by the Holy Ghost."

You can know if something is trained by the Holy Ghost. You know if it's God or the devil.

I'm telling you, as you start taking authority over the devil, it makes him mad. Absolutely makes him mad!

Watch what happened.

"And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them" (Acts 16:21-22).

You mean, men of God get beat because the discerning of spirits operates through them? Yeah. Oh sure. You recognized the devil. The gift of discerning of spirits has you recognize the devil. You recognize error. You recognize the spirit that is wrong. The devil doesn't want you to recognize him. (And you won't recognize a lot of them without the gift of discerning of spirits.)

"And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them"

(v. 23-25).

They are in jail with stocks around them, stripes on their backs, blood running down their backs because of the gift of discerning of spirits.

You might say, "I don't think I want this gift."

Let's keep reading. Paul and Silas praised God right in the middle of it.

"And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

"And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

"But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

"Then he called for a light and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

"And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

"And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

"And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house" (v. 26-34).

Did you see the end results when you praise God?

"And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

6

To Reveal False Prophets

"And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus: "Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

"But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

"Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

"And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

"And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

"Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord" (Acts 13:6-12).

Paul had the discerning of spirits manifested to him by the Holy Ghost and he saw the man's spirit. Paul saw that he was a false prophet. That's the reason Paul talked to him like he did. Can you believe talking to somebody like that?

When discerning of spirits comes into you, it can cause a lot of things to happen. You start fighting. You start standing up for God. You start standing up for righteousness.

When the deputy saw what was done, he believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

It's a doctrine of the Lord. It's in the Bible. It's a warning. Don't make fun of the Holy Ghost. God warned you in the Bible, don't make fun of the Holy Ghost.

The plight to the world will come upon you. All kinds of goofed-up diseases will come upon you, if you make fun of the Holy Ghost.

I've never known a man that made fun of the Holy Ghost that didn't die young. You better not do it.

If you make fun of the Holy Ghost, you'll make God mad at you. I'm telling you right now, it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God. And you can get Him angry if you start making fun of Jesus and making fun of the Holy Ghost. You have to watch yourself real close.

Some people came to my house (claimed to be good people) to spend the night. They stayed several days. I'd known them for years.

I went off and came back. There was a bottle of whiskey in the house and things like that. God dealt with me. When God showed me their spirit, God said, "Throw them out." I said, "Thank you, Lord." When God tells me to do something, I do it.

You're not supposed to let people come and take your house over. That's not what God wants for your house.

God has sent angels into my house. His holy presence has come and visited that house many, many times. The peace of God is in every room. It's going to stay that way.

Wherever you live, just pray in there. Bind up the devil and throw all evil spirits out, so you can live a sweet, comfortable, peaceable life. The devils will come and try to torment you, but they don't have any right on your property, if you just know that.

Don't Be An Ignorant Child

I was sitting on the platform in a convention one time in Denver, Colorado, when they introduced this guy, I wasn't even looking at him. I didn't recognize his name. I'd never heard of him in my life.

He walked up and started to speak. The moment I heard words in my ears coming from his mouth, the Holy Ghost jumped up inside me and my spirit became grieved. The Spirit of God said to my spirit, "Phony."

I said, "Oh no, God. Not in here, Lord. He's going to be one of our speakers."

The Holy Ghost said, "Phony, phony, phony."

There were 50 or 60 other people sitting on the platform. You might ask, "Why didn't God show them? They were spirit-filled believers. They love God. Why didn't God show the people that booked him?"

God won't ever give you the discerning of spirits unless you're available. You have to be open to it. You have to know about the 12th chapter of I Corinthians.

You can be a big spiritual leader in this country, but if you don't know about the 12th chapter of I Corinthians, if you don't study it, if you don't know how to operate it, the Holy Ghost won't give you discerning of spirits.

Finally, the people that were booking this fellow recognized what he was. Not only did they recognize what he was, they caught him.

My Brother and Sister, you have to have a great respect for the Holy Ghost and the gifts of the Spirit. If you don't show respect for it, God won't give it to you. He'll let you just glide along and just live a sort of normal Christian life, just being an *ignorant* child of God.

You see, you can be a child of God, a dedicated child of God, and *still be ignorant*. But I'm telling you, the gift of discerning of spirits is free.

The Holy Ghost that lives inside of you wants to show you the spirit of someone else that you NEED to know. Don't go around suspecting everything. Don't do that. Let the Holy Ghost manifest himself.

You might ask, "How am I going to know when the Holy Ghost manifests himself?"

Your spirit will become grieved. That's God's number one way to show you somebody else's spirit: when you're around them, your spirit becomes grieved. You will not feel *right* about the person. And besides that, down on the inside of you, your spirit will become grieved.

God does not want you to be tricked by any deceiving spirits.

Look At Peter And John

"But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:

"To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God" (Acts 8:9-10).

Do you see that: from the greatest to the least? And they believed that.

My Brother and Sister, make yourself available and believe the 12th chapter of I Corinthians, and that kind of junk won't be pulled on you. But if you don't do it, if you don't know anything about the gift of the discerning of spirits, it can happen to you also.

Now I don't want to judge a person. I don't try to judge a person. In fact, I don't even want to think anything about anybody. I don't try to judge every little move that they make that's not right or every little word they say that's not right. I'm not talking about that. That's the gift of suspicion. I'm not talking about that. That's a dumb gift.

I'm talking about when the Holy Ghost moves on the inside of you and gives you the gift of the discerning of spirits and shows you another person's spirit.

I don't care what they say, what they do or what they act like. I don't care how much they smile. I don't care how nice they are. I don't care how many times they get on the floor and pray. If their spirit is phony, it's phony.

"And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.

"But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

"Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding

the miracles and signs which were done.

"Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

"Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

"(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

"Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

"And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money.

"Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

"But Peter said unto him (because the gift of discerning of spirits began operating through Peter-author's parenthesis), Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

"Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

"For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

"Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me" (v. 11-24).

You can't buy the Holy Ghost with money. You can't buy any part of the gospel with money.

I meet preachers all over the country that say, "Norvel, I could have all kinds of money in this church. There's a man in town that has a lot of money. He wants to be one of the deacons (or assistant pastor, or song leader, or whatever). But the Holy Ghost showed me his spirit is not right and I

can't let him do it. He can come to church if he wants to, but I can't let him do it."

I'm telling you, the Lord will move upon you and give you the gift of the discerning of spirits.

I was riding in the car one day and a guy began to talk to me about going into business with him. The Spirit of God rose up in me and the discerning of spirits came to me. The Holy Ghost said to me, "No, no, no!"

You say, "What did you say?"

I said, "No, no, no!" I wouldn't go into business with a guy that the Holy Spirit showed me not to.

The discerning of spirits enables you to see what others can't see. It will guard you and rescue you, if you learn to make yourself available to the Holy Spirit.

Do you want the Holy Ghost to give you the discerning of spirits?

Say: "Thank you Lord, for the 12th chapter of I Corinthians. I am trusting the Holy Ghost to give me discerning of spirits every time that the devil tries to pull a trick on me; tries to deceive me; tries to appear to me as an angel of light trying to make me think something is right that is not right. From this day forward, the Spirit of God will rise up in me and give unto me the gift of discerning of spirits when the devil comes and tries to rob me of the blessings, peace, contentment, restfulness that my spirit has in God. He will rescue me, by the discerning of spirits from getting involved with evil spirits, deceiving spirits. I'll keep my peace of God because the Holy Ghost will show me that spirit as the Spirit wills.

"Thank you Jesus. I'm born again. I'm free from the devil's power. Thank you for the Holy Ghost. Thank you God, for the Holy Ghost."

THE GIFT OF DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

VOLUME NUMBER EIGHT

by

NORVEL HAYES



Norvel Hayes shares God's Word boldly and simply with an enthusiasm that captures the heart of the hearer. He has learned through personal experience that God's Word can be effective in every area of life — that it will work for anyone who will believe it and apply it.

Norvel owns several businesses which function successfully despite the fact that he spends over half his time away from the office, ministering the Gospel throughout the country. His obedience to God and his willingness to share his faith has taken him to a variety of places. He ministers in churches, prisons — anywhere the Spirit of God leads.